

Tale Feathers

Feb 2002

Volume 69
Number 2

Sharing My Adventures in South Africa

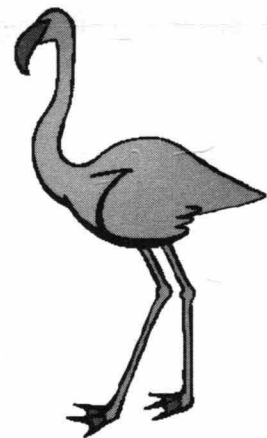
Paul Bauer

My birding and wildlife adventures in South Africa were exceptionally rewarding. I would like to share the highlights of this experience with my friends and Audubon members using a modest slide program. Some of the colorful birds, animals, and unique native cultures will be included along with a selection of the stunning scenic views.

Our group visited three private game reserves: Mala Mala adjacent to Kruger National Park; Ndumo and Hluhluwe. Each reserve has a different habitat to ensure the largest number of birds and mammals found. For the total trip we viewed over 320 species of birds and about 45 species of mammals including the big five up close and personal!

A four day extension to the Cape Town region offered a chance to experience this picturesque area. The scenic coast was explored to the Cape of Good Hope. We visited several major nature reserves, enjoyed a pelagic boat trip, and relished the many birds and flowers at the huge Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

This program serves as our Audubon General Meeting on Tues, March 19th at 7:30 p.m. Powder Valley Nature Center



Getting to Powder Valley: From the junction of I-44 and I-270, go east on I-44 and quickly exit on Watson Road to Geyer Road Light. Turn left(north) onto Geyer Road for 200 yds and turn left (west) onto Cragwold Road. Go west on Cragwold for 1 mile to nature center on right. Follow drive to parking lot. Enter building through left entrance.

Questions, call Mitch Leachman at 314-739-5112

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St. Louis Audubon Society

VOLUNTEERS

Sat and/or Sun, Feb 2/3
Meramec State Park Glade
Restoration
Help the Sierra Club and MO
DNR re-establish the open,
native glade community of wild-
flowers and grasses on selected,
rocky slopes in the park.
Hard, physical work, but the
results are well worth it!
Contact Susan Farrington at
(314) 577-9402 or
susanfmo@aol.com.

Sat and/or Sun, Feb 23/24
Washington State Park Glade
Restoration
Contact Susan Farrington at
(314) 577-9402 or
susanfmo@aol.com.

Join us for the next newsletter
mailing party! February 22nd
at 7:30 p.m.
Call or write the editor for time
and place.

Member Profiles

Mary Smidt was elected to the board as Interim Secretary in April 2000 and became Secretary in April 2001.

How would you describe your educational background?

I have a B.A. in Biology from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, and a PhD in Plant Pathology from the University of California, Davis.

How would you describe your current occupation?

I perform scientific research for Pharmacia, a global pharmaceutical company. Presently, I am in Oncology Pharmacology-which means I investigate ways to treat cancer.

What is your current function/role with SLAS?

Secretary of the Board of Directors.

What is your #1 conservation concern at any level, from local to global?

Habitat loss-locally and globally. With the loss of native ecosystems, including trees, grasses, flowers and water, we are also losing the birds and animals (including microorganisms) that depend on those habitats. The consequences are enormous: locally we lose a sense of the natural heritage of a place and globally the reduction in biodiversity ultimately limits the survival of all species.

In what ways can NAS or SLAS address this concern?

Education, education, education. Habitat is usually lost through actions by those that are ignorant rather than those that are purposely destructive.

What is your long-term vision/goals for SLAS?

The St. Louis area is blessed with an abundance of bird life. I hope that SLAS can continue to provide field trips and forums to help members appreciate what we have and the educational opportunities that are necessary for preserving the habitat that supports it.

Get Published!

The deadline for the March issue is Feb. 10. Please send articles, events and letters to Anne.

E-mail ambolte@swbell.net

phone 314.832.0938

post 6939 Sharp

St. Louis, MO 63116



EMERSON

Special Thanks!

Remember...Crummy Weather Means Good Birds

Jim Malone

So far this winter has been pretty mild. Although this may be more comfortable for us, it doesn't give us the really great winter birds that we see when the weather is really nasty. By now, we should be looking at Glaucous Gulls, Short-eared Owls, and Rough-Legged Hawks at Riverlands, but we still had Grasshoppers (for goodness sake) through much of December. This January, things got a bit colder for awhile and we have some good birds to show for it. On the 5th, a couple dozen birders visited Horseshoe Lake. We saw a good selection of wintering waterfowl, and a few raptors of the season, but the best birds of the trip were two adult Lesser Black-Backed Gulls, and a first winter Thayer's/Iceland Gull which we were unable to positively identify (it was a tough one). As the cold weather freezes the rivers and lakes, the interesting gulls will be back and we will be there to see them. I hope you can put on your warm clothes and join us!

February 9 (Saturday) Riverlands, 9:00 AM Eagles, other Raptors, a wide range of waterfowl, should be hanging around Riverlands in February. Recent reports on the internet suggest that Short-eared Owls have been moving South very late this year. It may be that they are at Riverlands in February. No matter, birding at this location is always good. To get there, take route 367 North from I-270. At the Missouri side of the Clark Bridge (which crosses the Mississippi River), turn right at the Fisca gas station to enter Riverlands. Turn right on the first road past the gas station. We will meet in the parking area next to the Teal Pond. Dress warmly!

March 9 (Saturday) Busch C. A., 8:00 AM Early Spring birding in the St. Louis is always difficult to predict. By March, it is possible to see early Pine Warblers picking at pine cones near the Fallen Oak nature trail. Wintering finches are usually still around and may show up at the feeders there. Waterfowl begin moving in earnest by now and Loons and Grebes are always possible. The earliest shorebirds may be wandering in if the weather has been mild, and some of the early migrating passerines are beginning to show up. Come and join us as we look through the Busch/ Weldon Springs area for the best of the season. To get there, take highway 40 (I-64) West from St. Louis to St. Charles County. Go left on highway 94 to the first stop light after the I-64/94 intersection. Turn right at highway D and follow it for a couple of miles to the entrance to Busch Conservation Area. We will meet in the parking area at Hampton Lake (just to the left of the entrance road). Come join us and get the jump on spring birding.

Our Popular Prairie Chicken Trip is on Again in 2002

Jim Malone

Twice previously, St. Louis Audubon Society has offered an April trip to Hi Lonesome Prairie near Sedalia Missouri to see Greater Prairie Chickens and lots of other great Prairie birds. This year we will be repeating this popular trip once again. This year we may need to limit the number of participants, so be certain to reserve a space early. On this trip we will Spend Friday night in Sedalia, Missouri, and go to Hi Lonesome Prairie at sun-up. Later Saturday morning we will visit a couple of other nearby areas then return to Sedalia for brunch. After we eat, we will drive to Columbia where we will visit Eagle Bluffs and Bradford Farms before returning to St. Louis. On past trips we have seen Prairie Chickens, Henslow's, Leconte's, and Vesper sparrows, Scissor-tailed flycatchers and lots of other great birds. If you want to see the Prairie Chickens dance and sing, call Jim Malone at (636) 536-1119 or e-mail me at stlaud@surfbest.net.

Enjoy Life! Go Birding !!

St. Louis Audubon Society's Bi-Annual Birdseed Sale

Friday, February 15th from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00p.m. and Saturday, February 16th from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Order for the early winter season and be the first on your block to start seeing the flocks migrate to your feeders. Order by Friday, February 8th for the 15th and 16th pickup. Seed must be picked by February 17th at the latest unless other arrangements have been made.

Make check payable to St. Louis Audubon Society and mail to:

Vicki Flier
18 Algonquin Wood Place
Glendale, MO 63122-2013
314-968-9166

Pick up will be at the NEW location of Wild Bird Center

12792 Olive Blvd.
Bellerive Plaza
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

All proceeds from the birdseed sale fund the education outreach programs.

Wild Bird Center is approximately two miles west of I-270 near Mason Road and Timber Run in the Bellerive Plaza. Look for the store between Schnucks and Hallmark. Any Audubon volunteer who would like to shop during this time gets 10 percent off any merchandise.

February Birdseed Order Form

Make check payable to:

St. Louis Audubon Society and mail to:

Vicki Flier
18 Algonquin Wood Place
Glendale, MO 63122-2013

Name

Address

Phone

Bird Seed Type	Lbs/ Bag	Qty.	x \$	Subtotal
Black Oil Sunflower	25 lb.		x \$9	
	50 lb.		x \$16	
No-Waste Mix no milo, has hulls	25 lb.		x \$8	
	50 lb.		x \$14	
Premium No-Waste no milo, no hulls	20 lb.		x \$9	
	40 lb.		x \$16	
Safflower Seed	25 lb.		x \$16	
	50 lb.		x \$28	
Thistle/Niger	10 lb.		x \$14	
Total				

Conservation Report

Sue Gustafson

Federal legislation benefits Missouri and bird conservation

The following was excerpted from the 2001 year-end National Audubon Advisory and summarizes important legislation related to bird conservation passed in the first session of the 107th Congress. Of particular note is the \$2 million of funding appropriated for Missouri's Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge. This is in addition to the \$1 million that was designated for Big Muddy land acquisition in 2000 as a result of former St. Louis Audubon board member Karen Goellner's work with Senator Kit Bond in procuring the funding.

FIRST SESSION OF THE 107th CONGRESS COMES TO A CLOSE

PASSED: AUDUBON'S LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

Fiscal year 2002's Interior Appropriations Bill - the legislation that secures the bulk of funding for birds, other wildlife and their habitat - included \$28.3 million for Audubon's Land and Water Conservation Fund priorities. These priorities include key habitat areas for birds and wildlife in 10 states. We'll work with the 107th Congress to secure funding for Audubon's Fiscal Year 2003 Land & Water Conservation Programs:

- (1) Alabama - Bon Secor NWR \$1,000,000
- (2) Arkansas - Kenai NWR \$3,300,000
- (3) California - San Diego NWR \$5,000,000 and San Bernadino NF \$1,500,000
- (4) Colorado - Arapaho NF \$6,600,000
- (5) Connecticut - Stewart B. McKinney NWR \$2,000,000
- (6) Louisiana - SE LA NWR Complex \$500,000
- (7) **Missouri - Big Muddy NWR \$2,000,000**
- (8) Montana - Red Rocks Lake NWR \$500,000
- (9) South Carolina - Waccamaw NWR \$2,000,000
- (10) Virginia - Back Bay NWR \$3,900,000

PASSED: MIGRATORY BIRD PROTECTION

Approximately 5 billion birds of 500 species - including many endangered bird species - migrate annually to North America from their wintering grounds in Latin America and the Caribbean. For many years, neo-tropical migratory bird populations have been

dwindling due to the destruction of their wintering habitats. Last year, Congress decided to do something about it and passed the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act - a 5-year measure focused on conserving and enhancing these habitats to help ensure these birds return to our backyards each Spring. Congress followed through on their commitment and authorized \$3 million to fund the Act for Fiscal Year 2002. This funding supports partnership programs that conserve and enhance habitat of neotropical migratory birds such as the Kirtland's Warbler, Hermit Thrush, Black-capped Vireo and Kentucky Warbler. At least 75 percent of the money goes to projects in the Caribbean and Latin America, where these birds spend their winters.

PASSED: INCREASED FUNDING FOR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

The National Wildlife Refuge System received a \$19 million increase over FY 2001 for the Operations and Maintenance budget of refuges. The National Wildlife Refuge System consists of more than 530 refuges that span across 50 states, host more than 700 bird species, and are the primary habitat for an estimated 250 threatened and endangered species. These refuges are critical for protecting our country's diverse bird and wildlife populations.

But in spite of their important role, they find themselves in dire need of care. Many are battling incompatible activities on and near refuge lands, inadequate water supplies, and insufficient budgets for operations, maintenance and new land acquisition. This year's increase in funding for America's Refuges is a great step forward, particularly as we near the 100th Anniversary of the Refuge System. Audubon will look to Congress to continue to do more for precious bird and wildlife havens for Fiscal Year 2003.



Budget Safari to Kenya: June 13-23, '02

Join our 6th St. Louis Audubon Safari to East Africa. This classic safari will visit a wide range of habitats and see massive herds of mammals. Over 50 species are found, including elephants, rhino, lion, leopard, and cape buffalo up close and personal! On each trip we also manage to find up to 320 species of birds, and experience the unique cultures of the Samburu, Kikuyu and Maasai people. Each day offers hundreds of stunning opportunities for unequaled photographs to record your once and a lifetime adventure.

Our budget safari costs \$3295 per person with double occupancy which includes round trip air fare via Northwest/KLM from New York through Amsterdam directly to Nairobi, Kenya. Notice the timing of this trip is great for teachers and families with teenagers. It is the price and timing of this safari that continues to make it so very popular.

We have fine tuned this safari for the maximum enjoyment of viewing wildlife at a relaxed pace. We stay a minimum of two nights in each national park lodge, which permits at least four game drives in each park at a relaxed pace with midday free time to enjoy the lively lodges and swimming pools, or to explore their elegant gardens for birders. Our safari starts and ends at Safari Park Hotel, located with 200 acres of lush gardens and pools about six miles from downtown Nairobi. On our first day, we travel north making several birding stops in different habitats, have lunch at the famous Mt. Kenyan Safari Club and then go birding in these higher altitude forests. Our drive continues to the Samburu Game Reserve which has a sizable river passing through 40 miles of dry brush land with many birds and animals found nowhere else in Kenya.

We also spend two days at Lake Nakuru National Park, famous for massive flocks of flamingos and numerous shorebirds and water birds. This lake is surrounded with lush forests which hosts many species of birds, both species of rhino, leopards and the rare Rothschild Giraffe. Finally, we enjoy three nights in the huge grasslands of the Maasai Mara/Northern Serengeti which is famous for enormous herds of wildebeest, zebra, lions birds of prey and unforgettable sunsets.

Call Paul Bauer at 314-921-3972 to obtain a detailed daily itinerary by mail.

TRACY MEMORIAL DEDICATION SCHEDULED FOR MAY 12, 2002.

Mary Lou Miller

The friends and family of Mr. Robert J. Tracy Jr. and members of the St. Louis Audubon Society will be happy to know that after years of working together to erect a memorial, the St. Louis Zoo has scheduled this memorial dedication for Sunday, May 12, 2002 at 2 pm in the St. Louis Zoo Bird Garden. Mr. Robert Tracy, age 39, died on August 19, 1996, after suffering a stroke. Because of his appreciation of nature, his wife Jaon Gittens-Tracy and family members chose the St. Louis Audubon Society as the recipient of memorial contributions. Many gifts to this memorial were given in his name. The St. Louis Audubon Society Board decided at a later date to match these contributions and place a memorial plaque regarding International Migratory Birds in the St. Louis Zoo Bird Garden. The dedication coincides with International Migratory Bird Day across the United States, and a special bird walk will take place that morning in Kennedy Woods in Forest Park led by St. Louis Audubon Society birders. Refreshments will be served following the dedication giving time for family and friends to visit and become acquainted. Additional information on this dedication will be in the next newsletter.

Joint Speaker Presentation with Sierra Club

Thursday, February 28 at 7:30 p.m. at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Pam Flowers will present a slide show of her solo journey across 2500 miles of arctic North America. From Feb 1993 to Jan 1994, she traveled from Barrow, Alaska to Repulse Bay, Canada with an 8-dog team, and became the first woman to do so alone. See slides of the remarkable wildlife, native peoples, and awesome landscapes she encountered. Her book, *Alone Across the Arctic*, will also be available. Plus, meet other members and discover opportunities for involvement throughout the society. Open to all, members or not. Refreshments will be available. From I-44, take the Vandeventer exit, turn south, go left at the next light which is Shaw Blvd, go 1 block to 4344 Shaw.

Questions, call Mitch Leachman at 314-739-5112.

Notes From the President:

Get ready for the Fifth Annual Backyard Bird Count sponsored by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology. The dates for the Count are February 15 - 18, 2002. It's so easy. Here's what you do:

Count the birds visiting your backyard feeder, your favorite spot in a local park or nature area or take a walk around your neighborhood. For each species of bird that you see, record the highest number of individuals that you observe at any one time during your count. Don't add a bird every time you see one at your feeder, you could be counting the same individual.

Watch for the birds for at least 15 minutes on each day that you participate. We recommend watching for a little longer, so you can get a good sense of what birds are in your area.

Enter your count on-line at the Great Backyard Bird Count site: <http://www.birdsource.org>. Use the State/Province checklist to submit your highest counts for that day.

View your results in the Map room and see other results from across the entire North American Continent.

Your participation will help scientists assess the status of winter birds. All ages and skills are welcome. You can enter your checklist on one day or all four days. The data that everyone gathers is of great significance to evaluating how birds are surviving across an entire continent. Become a Citizen Scientist!! Join the Great Backyard Bird Count on February 15, 16, 17, and 18. Your observations do count!!

Joint Meeting with WGNSS

Friday, February 8 at 7:30 p.m. at the Creve Coeur Community Center.

Every year our Society joins with the Webster Groves Nature Study Society for a joint meeting. This year, our speaker is Brad Jacobs, author and ornithologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation. Brad will discuss the Department's new book, *Birds in Missouri*, the first comprehensive pictorial and textual bird book specifically for Missouri. Copies of the book will be available.

Plus, meet other members and discover opportunities for involvement throughout the society. Open to all, members or not. Refreshments will be available.

From I-270 and Ladue, go east on Ladue, left at the light at New Ballas, go 1/2 mile north to the Creve Coeur Government Center at 300 N. New Ballas. Community Center is in the basement.

Questions, call Mitch Leachman at 314-739-5112.

Mark Your Calendar

Next Audubon General Meeting is March 19 at Powder Valley Nature Center and will include a slide presentation on the birds of South Africa.

Tale Feathers

Tale Feathers is published monthly by the St. Louis Audubon Society. Messenger Printing prints 3,000 copies of each newsletter on recycled paper using soy ink. Anne Bolte edits the newsletter.

St. Louis Audubon Society 2001 - 2002

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This form makes you a member of **both** the National and St. Louis Audubon.

Audubon is a membership organization dedicated to protecting birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. Our members are the source of our volunteer strength and the foundation of our financial support. By becoming a member, you will receive National Audubon Society's magazine as well as the St. Louis Audubon Society newsletter, *Tale Feathers*

St. Louis Audubon Society Membership Form

Membership category desired:

- ☐ Introductory / \$20
☐ Special two-year Introductory / \$30
☐ Sr. Citizen / \$15
☐ Student / \$15
☐ Other / _____

Send a check made out to:
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N01 7XCH

Please support your local chapter. Use this form to join or renew.